

Geographical Indications
A way forward for local development
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The code of practices : a strategic tool

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Plan

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Objectives for GI set-up

- Protection against usurpation and counterfeit
- Marketing tool
- Patrimony conservation
- Production control
- Territorial development

(Source: Siner-GI)

COP - functions

- Internal / external trust
 - Internal : COP = convergent behaviour
 - External : some transparency for all users
- Communication
 - A sign (GI name), a signal (perception), credible
 - COP is a way to put in evidence the technical achievements of the producers themselves

1 – COP = A document

- *a set of activities whose purpose is to demonstrate that an entity meets all quality requirements (ISO, 1998)*

Requirements

Obligations

Rules

The less is the better

- Two sets of requirements :
How to do / mean obligation
What should be obtained / result obligation
- Each rule = a guarantee to give / must be significant and assessable (control)

1.1 – A form to fill in 7 points

- The name
- Description of product (*tipicity*), raw material, and principal characteristics
- Methods (*practices*) to obtain the product
- Definition of geographical area
- Link between quality product and geographical environment / “causal interactions “
- Evidence that the food is originated (source)
- Name of verification body

1.2.a – How to define typicity?

- *The typicity of an agricultural product is*
- *(1) its relevancy to a type (genuineness)*
- *(2) which is distinguished and identified*
- *(3) by a reference human group*
- *(4) possessing knowledge distributed among various actors...*

1.2.b – How to define typicity?

- *...knowledge distributed among various actors includes*
- *(5) the knowledge to establish a type,*
- *(6) the knowledge to produce a true-to-type product,*
- *(7) the knowledge to evaluate that product and*
- *(8) the knowledge to appreciate it.*

1.3 – How to codify the practices ?

- Local knowledge as a main basis for justifying the GI recognition. Rules reflecting this local knowledge ?
- But GI producers must comply with general rules for foods
- Debate : Should COP combine implicit rules (for food safety) and explicit rules (due to the GI specialty) ?
- Debate : best practices / shared practices

1.4 – How to delimitate an area?

- The name : what geographical interpretation ?
- Delimitations available or in progress ?
And what logic for putting boundaries ?
- Product : the main practices and their area ?
- Tradition and history of the product as a spatial extension of competencies ?
- Current situation and actors location ?

1.5 – How to define “terroir”?

- *A terroir is*
- *(1) a delimited geographical area*
- *(2) where a human community*
- *(3) over the course of history generates and accumulates a collective body of production knowledge*
- *(4) based on a system of interactions between biophysical and human factors.*
- *(5) The sequence of socio-technical steps involved*
- *(6) reveals originality, (7) confers typicity (8) and earns a reputation*
- *(9) on a good originating in the geographical area in question.*

1.6 – How to prove the link to origin?

- Description of the causal interaction between :
 - details of the geographical area, including natural and human factors
 - characteristics of the agricultural product or foodstuff
 - The **systemic** effects / whole is more than addition of all elements
- Some key points to find out

2 – COP = A collective construction

- Main difference with other signs :Organic farming, Fair trade
GI = local and collective construction
- An elaboration within a set of neighbours, of people competing on the same market, of diverse legitimacies.
COP = a collective action
- Even being a national recognition, GI application as a bottom-up process.
COP = a Coordination tool

2.1 – Building up = compromise

- An application is a very complex setting up
Representations and interests are mixing.
Knowledge and resources are not equally distributed. **Conflicts** may appear
- Compromise must be found among **heterogeneous actors**. Agreements have to be stabilized into provisional rules.
Learning process must be conducted
- Several successive generations of COP
“Blank” periods can be useful

2.2 – Making choices

- Very often, local productions contain a great **variety** / how to codify without reducing this richness ?
- The more frequent ? The best controlled ? The one considered as more authentic by local actors ? The one chosen by the more powerful actor ?
- Only one / too many ?

Let the producers make decisions

Expertise reports can be useful.



3 – COP = A strategic tool

- Initiators of an application
Who is proposing GI as a solution ?
To what kind of problem ?
With what kind of interest ?
- **Inclusion / exclusion** of local operators
Each rule can be interpreted as such / favor ones and pull out others
- Very often, people building up the GI application are not those managing the GI system when registered

3.1 – COP as barriers to entry

- Rules are defining the relevant social network
- If rules are very **easy** to comply
All potential people can join the group.
Product volume is enlarging
Arguments to justify the protection and market recognition could be weakened
- If rules are very **hard** to comply
A little part of potential people is able to join : an “elite”. Product volume is reduced : a “niche”

3.2 – COP as new institution

- GI application = an organizational stake
- In the local landscape, the GI applicants have new role to assume towards policy-makers.
- What type of farmer or processor are favored ?
Who is personally in charge to identify the GI ?
- Local governance is affected / market prices, land selling, building agreement, and so on.

3.3 – Market approach

- Marketing positioning of the GI product may influence the COP.
- Size, volume, distance, needs of communication
- Changes in the status of the GI product
Local “terroir” specialty / “luxury” product at high price (escaping to local users)
- Rules for presentation, packaging, ripening, may be affected

3.4 – Scaling up and costs

- COP conception must anticipate the scaling up after recognition. How to insure effective availability of the product according to the expectations of the whole supply chain ?
- Seasonal production / Supermarket needs
- Finally, COP is designing the structure of all costs : production, transaction, assessment, marketing

3.5 – Obstacles and traps

- **Obstacles**

Remain dependant of the initiators or let the room to new users

Transport into the GI application all the supply chain tensions, GI becoming a new arena for conflicts

Facing changes of resources status, product status, producers status, organization modes, governance type

- **Traps**

Maximize the rules inducing unrealistic costs

Search unanimity for preventing the exclusion process

Conclusion 1

- Time to build up the COP

not lost time = a learning time, not possible to reduce or contract

- Useful time to reach the appearance of the group able to face responsibility, to make decision and to choose relevant rules and to share a vision of “terroir”.

- Not only fulfill a pre-conceived grid



Conclusion 2

- GI application as a process to reinforce trust.
 - Specificity
 - Transparency
- COP = technical rules + social differentiations
- Rules + repeated assessment = new solidarities